Effect of Fears on Psychosocial Adjustments and Self Esteem of Children Aged (12-16) Years

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ABSTRACT

Background: Fear had been defined as the emergence of symptoms of multiple anxiety as a case of emotional and physical or objective.

Objective: The aim of this study was to examine the fears and their relationship to psychological and social Adjustment and self-esteem in children in the age group of 12 to 16 years of both sexes, male and female, in the Irbid region schools in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Materials and Methods: a cross sectional descriptive study had been performed on a sample of 500 school children ranging in age between 12 to 16 years from the public schools of Irbid governorate, northern of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. A semi-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher investigating the socio-demographic factors and the psycho-social adjustment along with Rosenberg self-esteem scale had been administered over the study participants.

Findings: The study results revealed that 50% of the study participants were having fears that are less than average. While there was almost 0.4% with severe fears, 51% of the sample was within the Pass category of the Psychosocial adjustment, and 57% of the children were passing Self-esteem test. Moreover, findings of the current study had shown that there is a correlation between children fear and their psychosocial adjustment level. About 111 students were characterized as poor psychosocially adjusted, while 134 students showed good to the excellent level of psychosocial adjustment. Socio-cultural factors result showed that the positive significant relationship is detected between residence area (Urban and rural), Income level, parents educational level and occupation.

Conclusion: study findings conclude that: There was a statistically significant difference in fears among boys and girls, whereas girls exhibited higher fear intensity compared to boy's sample. There is a significant relation of fears in children aged 12 to 16 years, to their psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem degree. Psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem are correlated positively and significantly affected by socio-economic and socio-cultural factors of the children.

1. Introduction:

The poor conditions experienced by most countries in the world community had motivated them to pay attention to issues affecting childhood and adolescence and to support the emergence of new fears in children's lives (Witt et al., 2003). by creating the right atmosphere to promote and develop the potential of children, which contributes to its role in the community and increase the tender, thereby increasing the developed societies experiencing a tremendous development in all areas, whether the ability of political, economic and scientific and technological (Vanoli, 2009). This community development may impact clearly in the social life in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (sait, 2007).

Child's growth stage, especially those confined between late childhood and early adolescence is characterized by, many of the physiological, psychological and emotional changes that in turn affect a clear impact on social development. Growth either mentally or physically is characterized by that the deviation from the normal growth rate leads the child to

feel introversion and anxiety (Bjorklund, 2007).

Emotions of children are featured at this stage by violence that is disproportionate in nature with the causes of these stimuli, and his inability to control, and tends to the nature of adolescence to assertiveness and contact with the community and increase the pride in his personality (Teicher, 2000), which motivate him to the formation of personal opinions that aid to comply with the standards and social values and traditions as well as to fulfill psychological, school and social harmony, while the inability to achieve these forms of compatibility to confer on the nature of the Teenager changes give rise to anxiety and fear (Holmbeck, 2010).

The adolescence of the most important stages in an individual's life (Marcia, 1980), which is transmitted through its dependence on the family to self-dependency but it is influenced by the idea of losing his safety, which was provided by his family so he is working hard to reconcile the desire for independence from the family environment and the need for safety (Eccles, 1993).

Habits, values, and traditions of the community may be one of the influential factors that cause the emotions of children (Hummon, 1992), it is possible that the environment in which the child resides made him strong is not afraid of some of the reasons and has good mental health help him to prove itself, while it is possible to be another environment to the contrary and works in a negative impact on the child (Harris,1995).

The child's emergence on fear inevitably leads to maladjustment, which in turn is a major cause in the individual fails in the community, as a result of a lack of understanding of itself and its inability to satisfy its needs, therefore resort to behaviorally abnormal methods which together ultimately lead to anxiety(Witt et al., 2003).

This research examines the fears and their relationship to psychological and social Adjustment and self-esteem in children in the age group of 12 to 16 years of both sexes, male and female, in the Irbid region schools in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**.**

The study problem is summarized in the negative impact of the fears that have suffered by children in the age stage from 12 to 16 years on the mental health of the child and the degree of self-esteem and its psychosocial adjustment. The state of fear is considered earned and are adversely affected by the fears of older age groups in addition to the unsuitable family environment, which could be characterized by low social and cultural level of the family members**.**

Many studies have indicated that both males and females are having many fears that have characterized each separately, as well as the age groups each of which is characterized by a number of fears**.**

Therefore, research problem could be summarized in answering the following questions**:**
1. Is there a relationship between psychological and social fears in children and psychosocial adjustment?
2. Is there a relationship between fears and self-esteem in children of the age range between 12 and 16 years?
3. is there a link between the social and cultural level and the psychosocial adjustment in the children of the age range between 12 and 16 years?
4. Is there a relationship between the social and cultural level and the common fears of the children?
5. Is fear and Psychosocial Adjustment in children vary according to gender?

2. Study Aims:
The aims of the current study are to:

Identify the fears and their relation to the psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem among children aged between 12 and 16 years old.

Investigate the effects of psychosocial adjustments and self-esteem among children aged between 12 and 16 years old.

Compare between boys and girls of the age period of 12 to 16 years regarding their fear, psychosocial adjustment, and self-esteem.

3. Methodology:
3.1. Sample:

The study sample included 500 participants of school children; males and females. That is ranging in age between 12 and 16 years old. The random sampling strategy was followed to select the study sample for both males and females.

3.1.1.Sample selection criteria:

Study sample should compose of 500 students, the age of participants is within the range of 12 to 16 years, sample selection should cover all the schools representing both rural and urban regions, and different socio-cultural areas, sample participants are divided equally into boys and girls (250 for each).

3.2. Setting:

The study was conducted in Irbid governorate, North of Jordan, covering both urban and rural areas. Both boys and girls schools were covered in the study.

3.3. Design:

A cross-sectional descriptive study design was used to answer the research questions.

3.4.Preparation of Data Collection:

Researchers got the approval and official permission from both the college administration and the principals of the schools in the selected study setting. Literature review then was performed, covering past and current available literature about the study topic. study tools were prepared, adopted and submitted to a jury of experts to assess the validity of the study tools. Ethical considerations included getting oral informal consent from study involved elements (students and their parents)

to agree on the participation in the study. The aim and the nature of the study were explained to the subjects to obtain their consent and they were told about data confidentiality.

A pilot study was performed on 20 randomly selected students of both genders, to assess the clarity and consistency of the study tools. Then the pilot study sample was included in the total sample of the study (n=500).

3.5. Tools of the study
Data collection from the study sample included the utilization of Three tools

3.5.1. Tool one
Semi-structured questionnaire questions developed by the researchers to collect participants socio-demographic data, such as School and area name, participants' educational level, fathers' occupation and educational level, mothers' occupation and educational level, family members number, childbirth order, and total monthly family income

3.5.2. Tool Two
The Rosenberg self-esteem scale, developed by sociologist Dr. Morris Rosenberg, which includes a ten-item Likert-type scale with items answered on a four points scale – from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Five of the items have positively worded statements and five have negatively worded ones.

3.5.3. Tool Three
Psycho-social adjustment questionnaire statements to measure children psycho-social adjustment score. statements were of a Likert type scale of four answers (always, sometimes, never, disagree).

The questionnaire was delivered to the students to be filled with the aid of the research group members and their parents. Period of data collection took about a month.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software package, version 16.0, descriptive statistics and frequencies were calculated, Pearson correlation factor (r) was used to detect the association of socio-demographic factors fears, self-esteem, and psychosocial adjustment. Cross-tabulation was generated to investigate the descriptive relationship between study variables and Children's fear, Psychosocial adjustment, and their self-esteem.

4. Results:
Table 1-13 displays the characteristics of the participants according to the socio-demographic variables

The following tables present the frequency of study participants according to the studies socio-demographic variables.

Table 1: *Sex:*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Boy	250	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Girls	250	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The previous table shows that the number of study participants was divided equally between boys and girls

Table 2: *Age*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Total Percent
Valid	12-less than 14	211	42.2	42.2	42.2
	14-16	289	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Regarding age, it could be observed from the following figure (1) that 57.8% of the total sample count were between 14 and 16 years old.
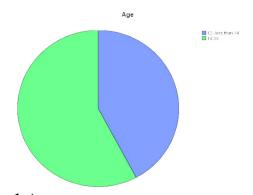

Figure 1. Age

Table 3: *Region*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Urban	338	67.6	67.6	67.6
	Rural	162	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Geographical distribution of the study sample regarding residence either in rural or urban areas had revealed that 67.6% of the study participants were living in urban areas. See figure 2
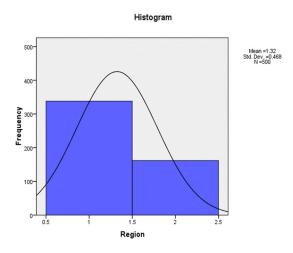
Figure 2. Histogram

Table 4: *Father Education*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Illiterate or read and write	75	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Secondary Education	143	28.6	28.6	43.6
	University Education	134	26.8	26.8	70.4
	Higher Education	148	29.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The previous table illustrates that the highest category in the sample was children that are having parents with a higher education level, while the lowest was those who are their parents are illiterate or able to read and write.

Table 5: *Father Occupation*

		Frequency	Percen	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Work	430	86.0	86.0	86.0
	Doesn't work	70	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

When classifying the children according to fathers' occupation, it could be observed that 86% of the sample participants are having working fathers, and 14% are having non-working fathers.

Table 6: *Mother Education*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Illiterate	85	17.0	17.0	17.0
	Secondary Education	135	27.0	27.0	44.0
	University Education	113	22.6	22.6	66.6
	Higher Education	167	33.4	33.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Results in the previous table show that 33.4% of the participant's mothers were highly educated while 17% were illiterate or read and write.

Table 7: *Mother Occupation*

		Frequency	Percen	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Work	192	38.4	38.4	38.4
	Doesn't Work	308	61.6	61.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

When calculating the frequencies of mothers occupation, 61.6% of the student's mothers had no job and were nonworkers.

Table 8: *Family Members Number*

		Frequency	Percen	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3-5	86	17.2	17.2	17.2
	6-8	138	27.6	27.6	44.8
	9-11	146	29.2	29.2	74.0
	More than 11	130	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Frequencies of child family members number for the study participants revealed that there were almost an equal frequencies between the 6-8, 9-11, and more than 11 categories . while the lowest category that represented having 3 to 5 members in the family represented 17.2% of the total sample.

Table 9: *Child Birth Order*

		Frequency	Percen	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	First	77	15.4	15.4	15.4
	Second	90	18.0	18.0	33.4
	Third	107	21.4	21.4	54.8
	Fourth or more	226	45.2	45.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

When calculating the childbirth order for the students in the study sample m about half of the students were categorized within the fourth or more category, while the lowest representation was for the first category that indicates the child is the first member in the family.

Table 10: *Income*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor Socioeconomic Status	123	24.6	24.6	24.6
	Moderate Socioeconomic Status	244	48.8	48.8	73.4
	High Socioeconomic Status	133	26.6	26.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Socio-economics represented by total monthly income was detected as well and indicated that 48.8% of the students were within the range of moderate socioeconomic status.

Table 11: *Fears*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No Fear	100	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Fears Less than Average	245	49.0	49.0	69.0
	Average fears	122	24.4	24.4	93.4
	More than average fears	31	6.2	6.2	99.6
	Severe fears	2	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Fear intensity for the **total sample** is represented by the previous table and the following figure (Figure 3) that indicate that half of the study participants were having fears that are less than average. While there was almost 0.4% with severe fears.
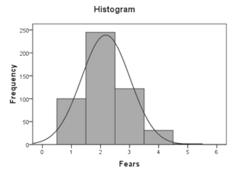

Figure 3. Histogram

Table 12. *Psychosocial Adjustment:*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	111	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Pass	255	51.0	51.0	73.2
	Good	118	23.6	23.6	96.8
	Excellent	16	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

When analyzing psychosocial adjustment for the children, table and graphical representation had shown that 51% of the sample was within the Pass category of the Psychosocial adjustment. (See Figure 4)
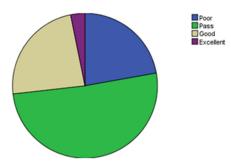

Figure 4. The Psychosocial adjustment

Table 13. *Self-Esteem:*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	61	12.2	12.2	12.2
	Pass	285	57.0	57.0	69.2
	Good	121	24.2	24.2	93.4
	Excellent	33	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

From Self-Esteem analysis showed in the previous table, it could be observed that 57% of the children were passing Self-esteem test. Moreover, a few percentages 6.6% had excellent self-esteem level. (See figure 5 for graphical representation)
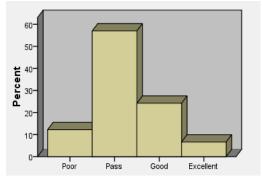

Figure 5. Self-Esteem

Figure (6) illustrates the Independent sample t-test analysis results for gender variable regarding the fear intensity.
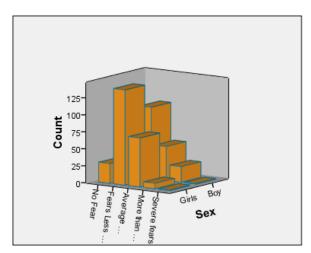

Figure 6. Illustrates the Independent sample t-test analysis.

Table 17: shows Kendall's tau_b correlation coefficient analysis for Children Psychosocial adjustment and Self-Esteem.

			Psychosocial Adjustment	Self Esteem
Kendall's tau_b	Psychosocial Adjustment	Correlation Coefficient	1	0.116**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.004
		N	500	500
	Self-esteem	Correlation Coefficient	0.116**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004	.
		N	500	500

5. Discussion:

Results of the present study had shown that the socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants are represented as the following :

There was an equal representation of both boys and girls in the study, each gender represented 50% of the sample.

Children in the age range of 14-16 years old got a higher percentage of 57.8% of the total sample when compared to those located in 12-less than 14 categories.

In term of residence region, urban residing children represented 67.6% while rural areas residing children were 32.4% of the total sample count.

Figure (7) Displays the correlation coefficient factor analysis for the study variables
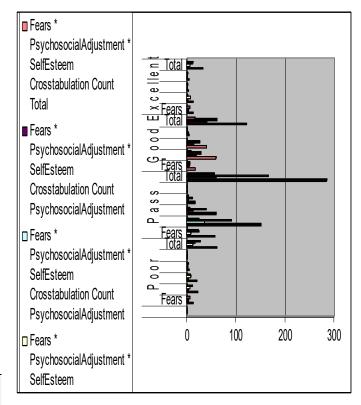

Figure 7. Graphical representation of Correlation between Fears, Psychosocial adjustment and Self-esteem in Children aged (12-16) years.

When study sample was analyzed regarding the educational level of the father, higher education fathers were the highest represented category of 29.6% while secondary education, university education and illiterate or read and write categories were 28.6 %, 26.8%, and 15.0 %, respectively.

Regarding fathers' occupation, there was a clear dominance for the working father's category with a percentage of 86% over the non-working category which represented 14% of the total sample count.

On the other hand, mothers educational level was analyzed, and results showed that 33.4% of children's mothers were within the higher education category, 27.0% were within the secondary education and finally, 17.0% were illiterate or read and write level.

For the mothers' occupation, almost two-thirds of the sample participants had non-working mothers with a percentage of 61.6% and 38.4% were working.

Specific family variables were analyzed as well. For example, family members number, childbirth order, and monthly income.

For family members number, categories were 3-5, 6-8, 9-11 and more than 11 members, and harvested 17.2%, 27.6%, 29.2%, and 26.0 %, respectively.

Childbirth order results showed that almost half of the study participants represented the category (Fourth or more) in the scale, with a percentage of 45.2 %, while other categories such as first, second, and third represented 15.4 %, 18.0%, and 21.4 %, respectively.

The third factor related to family setting was the monthly family income. Results indicated that 48.8% of the total sample represented moderate socioeconomic status, while poor socio-economic status represented 24.6% and the high socio-economic status got 26.6% of the total sample.

Statistical analysis of children fears level revealed that about half of the study sample had fear level marked as less than average with a percentage of 49.0% while children with no fear were 20% of the sample, and 24.4% had average fears.

Moreover, students with more than average fears represented 6.2% and finally, the severe fear category which is close to zero represented 0.4% of the total sample.

When applying the psycho-social adjustment test, more than half of the study sample passed with 51% ratio, while poor, good, and excellent represented 22.2%, 23.6%, and 3.2%, respectively.

Finally, examining the students' self-esteem pattern had shown that 57% of the study sample were categorized as (Pass), and 24.2% as good self-esteem level. Furthermore, poor and excellent got lower percentages with 12.2% and 6.6%, respectively.

5.1. Differences in fear intensity among boys and girls:

To analyze the differences of fear among the study participants regarding gender variable (Boys and Girls), independent sample T-test was performed.

Results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between fear intensity among boys and girls at p level less than 0.05.

Results indicated that girls evinced quantitative and qualitative differences from boys in the intensity of fears.

These results are compatible and supported by Gullon and King (1992) that reported higher score for girls than boys in fear intensity.

Moreover, these findings are supported by the findings of Grills and Ollendick (2002) which indicated the difference in fear intensity between boys and girls and found that girls are higher in fear intensity than boys.

Increase in girls fears compared to boys fears could be attributed to the low level of their participation in society related activities, and this could be a consequence of the cultural setup of the Saudi community.

Further explanation is the differences in the physiological properties between boys and girls.

On the other hand, Afzali (2016) found that there are no statistically significant differences in social fear intensity between boys and girls in the kindergarten stage, but age range differences here are taken into consideration when compared to our study.

5.2. Relation of children fear with psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem among children aged 12-16 years:

Study results showed that there is a correlation between children fear and their psychosocial adjustment level. About 111 students were characterized as poor psychosocially adjusted, while 134 students showed good to the excellent level of psychosocial adjustment.

Children with no fear and fearless than average constituted about 50% of the sample and showed fair levels of psychosocial adjustment.

Correlation factor results between fear and psychosocial adjustment showed that there is a significant correlation between them.

When correlating children fears to self-esteem level, results indicated that there is a negative statistically significant correlation between fear and self-esteem.

These results are compatible with the results of a study performed by Kamel (2003), who concluded that there is a negative correlation between children social fears and self-esteem.

Moreover, these findings are supported by the results of Al-Lahami study that concluded that there is a negative correlation between fear and self-esteem among school children in the elementary school.

5.3. Effects of psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem among children aged 12-16 years:

Study findings showed that there was a correlation between socio-cultural factors and both psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem.

Kendall's Tau-b correlation factor analysis revealed the presence of a statistically significant correlation between children self-esteem and psychosocial adjustment. Correlation factor was 0.116 at p values less than 0.05.

Socio-cultural factors result showed that the positive significant relationship is detected between residence area (Urban and rural), Income level, parents educational level and occupation.

These findings are compatible with Lahav (2004) that indicated the correlation of self-esteem to child psychosocial adjustment, and low socio-economic children were less rated regarding self-esteem and psychosocial adjustment.

Results regarding socio-economic factors correlation to self-esteem and psychosocial adjustment are strongly supported by the results of Satapathy, that concluded that many socio-demographic factors, especially parents educational level and occupation are in

relation with children self-esteem and psychosocial adjustment.

6. Conclusion:

Finally, study findings conclude that: There was a statistically significant difference in fears among boys and girls, whereas girls exhibited higher fear intensity compared to boy's sample. There is a significant relation of fears in children aged 12 to 16 years, to their psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem degree. Psychosocial adjustment and self-esteem are correlated positively and significantly affected by socio-economic and socio-cultural factors of the children.

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